MN GreenStep Cities

Implement Proven Sustainability Best Practices in *YOUR* City!

Presentation updated March 1st, 2010

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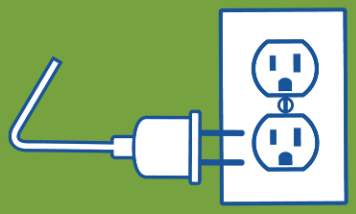

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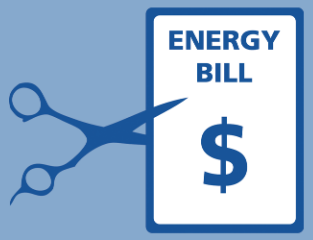


www.CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org

Introduction: GreenStep Cities

Taking action with proven best practices

GreenStep Cities is an action-oriented voluntary program offering a cost-effective, simple pathway to implementation of sustainable development best practices that focus on greenhouse gas reduction

What is GreenStep all about?

- Provides a "Pathway to Sustainability" that is cost-effective, pragmatic & achievable for all cities
- Achieves meaningful reductions in greenhouse gases & other positive environmental outcomes
- Provides assistance & peer learning for local governments to achieve best practices
- Promotes innovation
- Identifies state agency staff and others who can help cities implement each specific best practice
- Inspires and assists residents, businesses & community institutions to take action
- Recognizes local governments for their past accomplishments and their new efforts spurred by the program

What makes GreenStep different?

- Focused on Minnesota
- Geared toward smaller cities
- Best practices developed by experts in their fields from MN
- Action oriented
- Allows flexibility with each Best Practice
- Gives credit for actions you've already taken and helps you identify new actions
- Identified real resource people who can help you with each best practice.
- Online case studies to give you examples of how it's worked.

Why would my City do this?

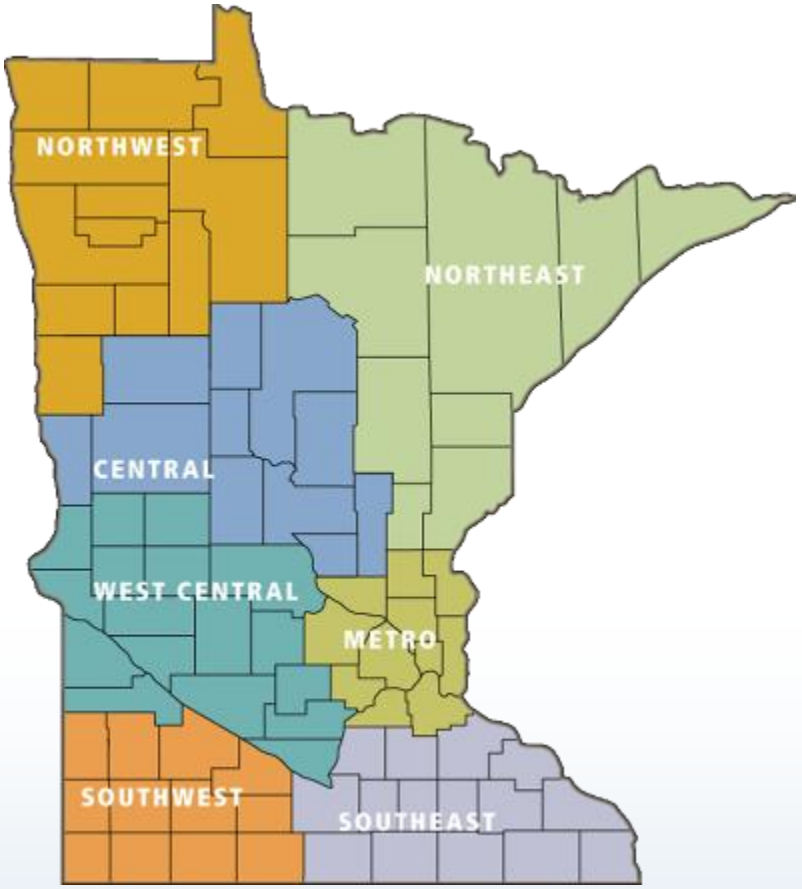
For a healthy, resilient community:

- Cheaper-to-operate & green buildings
- Lower costs to government, business, educational institutions & citizens
- Ecological infrastructure, low-impact development
- Cleaner water, air & viable habitat
- Walkable, bikeable communities and healthier citizens & businesses
- Transportation options that connect jobs & housing
- Local food production
- Local renewable energy production
- More local, green jobs

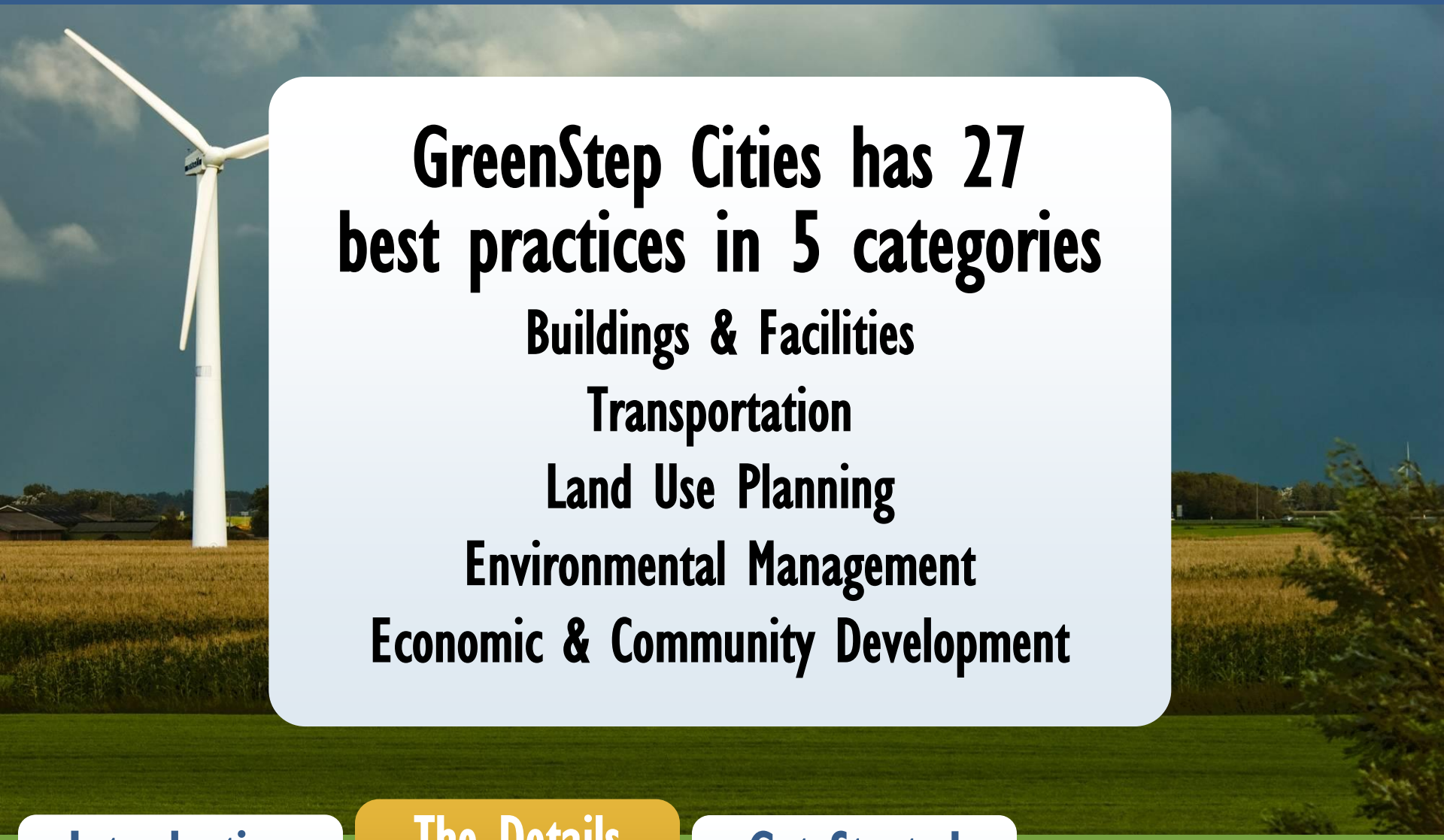
Are other cities already involved?

Yes! A few cities taking action are:

- Pine River
- Bloomington
- Edina
- St. Louis Park
- Falcon Heights
- Victoria
- Apple Valley
- Grand Rapids
- Austin
- Luverne
- Spring Grove
- Mahtomedi
- Northfield
- Oakdale
- Bemidji



The Details: Best Practices



GreenStep Cities has 27 best practices in 5 categories

Buildings & Facilities

Transportation

Land Use Planning

Environmental Management

Economic & Community Development

Which category city are you?

Category A Cities: Very small cities with no more than one public building and no more than two full-time equivalent staff.

Category B Cities: Small to mid-size cities that have several public buildings and at least several staff. Category B cities maintain roads and usually a separate public works department and a planning/development department.

Category C Cities: Mid-size to large cities that are within a metropolitan area or serve as a regional economic and service center. Category C cities are served by a regular route transit service, provide a complete set of urban services, and have distinct commercial and industrial areas. Adjoining cities working together on the GreenSteps program must also be considered Category C cities.

Programmatic Requirements

Program Requirements			City Category		
			A	B	C
Buildings & Facilities	1	Efficient Existing Public Buildings		Required	Required
	2	Efficient Existing Private Buildings			
	3	New Green Buildings			
	4	Efficient Building and Street Lighting & Signals			
	5	Building Reuse			
		Total BPs Required	1	2	2
Transportation	6	Complete Green Streets			Required
	7	Mobility Options			
	8	Efficient City Fleets			
	9	Demand-Side Travel Planning			
		Total BPs Required	1	1	2
Land Use	10	Comprehensive Planning and Implementation	Required	Required	Required
	11	Allow for Higher Density			
	12	Efficient and Healthy Development Patterns			
	13	Efficient Highway-Oriented Development			
	14	Conservation Design			
		Total BPs Required	1	2	2
Environmental Management	15	Environmentally Preferable Purchasing	Required	Required	Required
	16	Urban Forests		Required	Required
	17	Efficient Stormwater Management			Required
	18	Green Infrastructure			
	19	Surface Water Quality			
	20	Improve Water and Wastewater Facilities			
	21	Septic Systems			
	22	Manage Solid Waste			
		Total BPs Required	1	3	4
Econ/Cmnity Development	23	Benchmarks & Community Engagement	Required	Required	Required
	24	Green Business Development			Required
	25	Renewable Energy			
	26	Local Food			
	27	Business Synergies			
		Total BPs Required	1	2	3
		Floating BPs (additional to required BPs)	3	2	2
		Total BPs Required (including floating)	8	12	15

Sample Best Practices

- Improve the efficiency of city street lighting and signals
- Improve the efficiency of drinking water and waste water facilities
- Construct new buildings to meet green building standards
- Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect natural systems
- Increase city tree and plant cover
- Adopt an environmentally preferable purchasing policy
- Strengthen local food production and access
- Use assistance programs for green business and job development

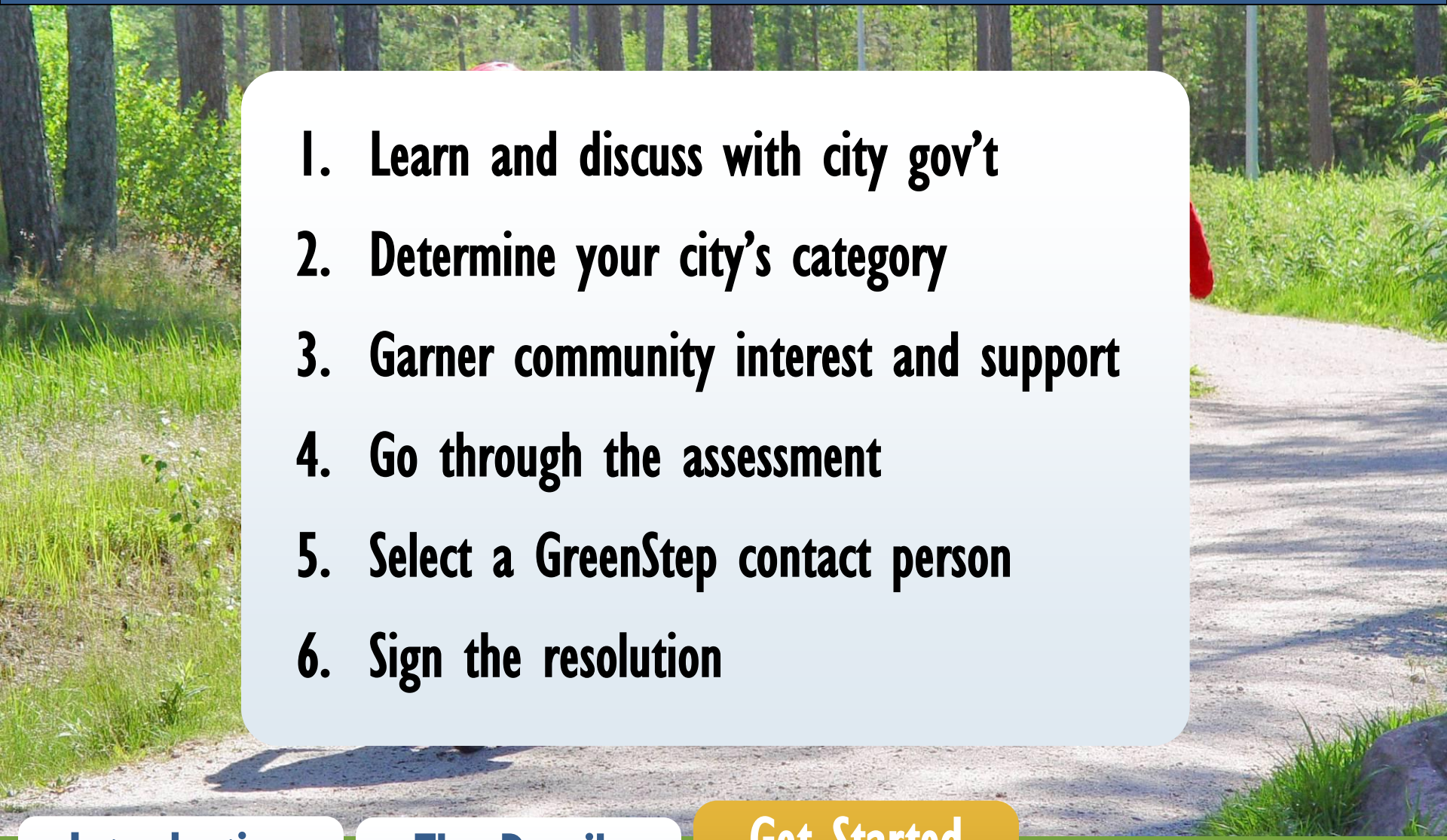
Best Practice Actions . . . *for trees*

Within each Best Practice there are a series of Best Practice Actions that a city can take to implement that best practice. This example is for trees.

Increase city tree and plant cover:

- Qualify as a Tree City USA, or
- Adopt MN TreeTrust/Boonestro tree planting standards as city policy, or
- Budget tree plantings to reach 75% residential canopy cover in 15 yrs., or
- Enact street design standards that incorporate street trees

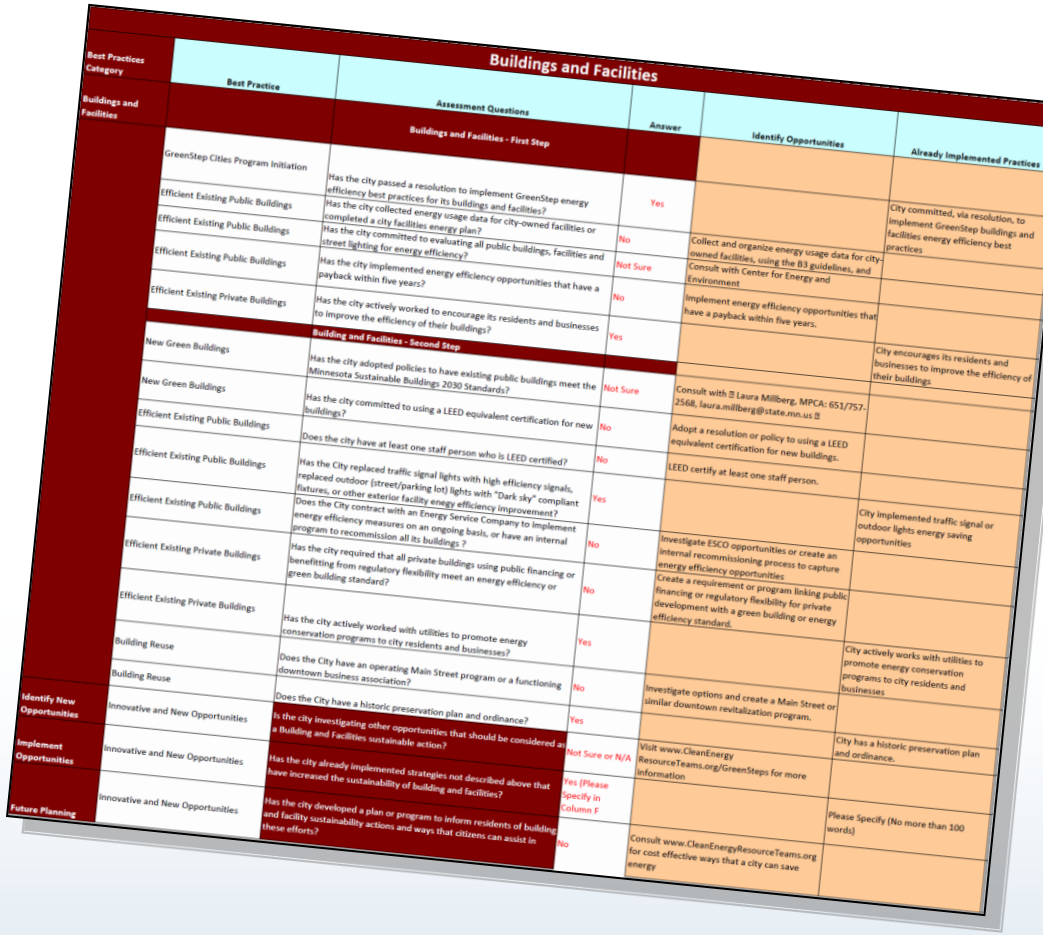
Get Started: Six Simple Steps



1. Learn and discuss with city gov't
2. Determine your city's category
3. Garner community interest and support
4. Go through the assessment
5. Select a GreenStep contact person
6. Sign the resolution

The Assessment Tool

- Walk through what you've already done…and what good opportunities might be
- Learn more about what's happening in departments throughout your city
- Partner with neighboring communities



Best Practices Category	Best Practice	Buildings and Facilities Assessment Questions	Answer	Identify Opportunities	Already Implemented Practices
Buildings and Facilities		**Buildings and Facilities - First Step**			
	GreenStep Cities Program Initiation	Has the city passed a resolution to implement GreenStep energy efficiency best practices for its buildings and facilities?	Yes		
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Has the city collected energy usage data for city-owned facilities or completed a city facilities energy plan?	No	Collect and organize energy usage data for city-owned facilities, using the B3 guidelines, and	City committed, via resolution, to implement GreenStep buildings and facilities energy efficiency best practices
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Has the city committed to evaluating all public buildings, facilities and street lighting for energy efficiency?	Not Sure	Consult with Center for Energy and Environment	
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Has the city implemented energy efficiency opportunities that have a payback within five years?	No	Implement energy efficiency opportunities that have a payback within five years.	
	Efficient Existing Private Buildings	Has the city actively worked to encourage its residents and businesses to improve the efficiency of their buildings?	Yes		City encourages its residents and businesses to improve the efficiency of their buildings
		Building and Facilities - Second Step			
	New Green Buildings	Has the city adopted policies to have existing public buildings meet the Minnesota Sustainable Buildings 2030 Standards?	Not Sure	Consult with Laura Millberg, MPCA: 651/757-2568, laura.millberg@state.mn.us	
	New Green Buildings	Has the city committed to using a LEED equivalent certification for new buildings?	No	Adopt a resolution or policy to using a LEED equivalent certification for new buildings.	
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Does the city have at least one staff person who is LEED certified?	No	LEED certify at least one staff person.	
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Has the City replaced traffic signal lights with high efficiency signals, replaced outdoor (street/parking lot) lights with "Dark sky" compliant fixtures, or other exterior facility enegy efficiency improvement?	Yes		City implemented traffic signal or outdoor lights energy saving opportunities
	Efficient Existing Public Buildings	Does the City contract with an Energy Service Company to implement energy efficiency measures on an ongoing basis, or have an internal program to recommission all its buildings ?	No	Investigate ESCO opportunities or create an internal recommissioning process to capture energy efficiency opportunities	
	Efficient Existing Private Buildings	Has the city required that all private buildings using public financing or benefitting from regulatory flexibility meet an energy efficiency or green building standard?	No	Create a requirement or program linking public financing or regulatory flexibility for private development with a green building or energy efficiency standard.	
	Efficient Existing Private Buildings	Has the city actively worked with utilities to promote energy conservation programs to city residents and businesses?	Yes		City actively works with utilities to promote energy conservation programs to city residents and businesses
	Building Reuse	Does the City have an operating Main Street program or a functioning downtown business association?	No	Investigate options and create a Main Street or similar downtown revitalization program.	
	Building Reuse	Does the City have a historic preservation plan and ordinance?	Yes		City has a historic preservation plan and ordinance.
Identify New Opportunities	Innovative and New Opportunities	Is the city investigating other opportunities that should be considered as a Building and Facilities sustainable action?	Not Sure or N/A	Visit www.CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org/GreenSteps for more information	
Implement Opportunities	Innovative and New Opportunities	Has the city already implemented strategies not described above that have increased the sustainability of building and facilities?	Yes (Please Specify in Column F		Please Specify (No more than 100 words)
Future Planning	Innovative and New Opportunities	Has the city developed a plan or program to inform residents of building and facility sustainability actions and ways that citizens can assist in these efforts?	No	Consult www.CleanEnergyResourceTeams.org for cost effective ways that a city can save energy	

Create & Sign a Resolution

Make it official! Key requirements include:

- Identify a GreenStep contact person
- Plan to involve community members, civic and educational organizations and businesses
- Pick a few best practices to start on
- Commit to implement a minimum number of required and optional GreenStep best practices
- Add “whereas clauses” to highlight why your community is doing this

Question and Answer

- How might GreenStep Cities work for you?
- Are there activities you're already doing?
- What other questions do you have?

GreenStep Partners

Main Partners:

- Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Minnesota Office of Energy Security

Key Collaborator: League of Minnesota Cities

Co-developers:

- Great Plains Institute
- Urban Land Institute – MN and Regional Council of Mayors
- Center for Energy & Environment
- Izaak Walton League – MN Chapter

For More Information

Lissa Pawlisch
CERTs Coordinator
U of M RSDP

Diana McKeown
Metro CERT Coordinator
Green Institute